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ABSTRACT

Data from the 1980 Census, post-Census supplements, and other sources are used to establish a base of information on the Asian American community in the tri-state (New York/New Jersey/Connecticut) metropolitan area, in order to assess the social service needs of this population. The Asian American presence and the growth and diversity of the community are detailed. The study examines the dynamics of growth in the Asian community in the areas of immigration, citizenship, and ethnicity by birthplace. Key findings on Asian American family life in the region are presented in the following categories: (1) natural increase; (2) age and sex; (3) marital patterns; (4) children in the household; (5) household size and type; and (6) subfamilies. The report provides statistics on the community's educational characteristics, in terms of English language proficiency and educational attainment, and its economic profile, in terms of labor force participation, occupations, and income; findings on housing conditions are also presented. On the basis of these data, the study identifies the following human service needs of the tri-state Asian American community: (1) intensive English language instruction; (2) bilingual and remedial education; (3) business and employment opportunities and programs; (4) affordable housing; (5) child-care centers; (6) family service centers; and (7) health care. The report includes 28 graphs and charts. (AF)

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Outlook

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THE GROWING ASIAN PRESENCE IN THE TRI-STATE REGION

PUBLISHED BY:

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HISTORY OF THE STUDY

In 1987, a group of Asian community leaders in the Tri-State Region met with United Way representatives to propose the implementation of a demographic study of the Asian American community in the Region to promote a better understanding of this emerging population. There had been no detailed study of this group since 1976 and information concerning Asian Americans from the 1980 Census was not yet available; therefore, the gap between existing data and the actual community had become increasingly wide.

A plan was proposed to develop a current data base focused on Asian Americans in this Region to do the following:

1. A two phase study to include first a general demographic report of the Asian population and in phase two a detailed needs assessment concerning health and human service delivery.
2. The development of an Advisory Committee to oversee and direct research activities consisting of representatives from the five major Asian subgroups.
3. Recruitment of a panel of consultants representing the major subgroups to provide technical expertise for the project.
4. Election of co-chairpeople to provide the overall administration for the project.

The Advisory Committee was established to implement the plan and oversee the project co-chaired by Charles P. Wang, Executive Director of the Chinese-American Planning Council, and Lily Wong, Esquire. Consequently, the Committee selected the Regional Plan Association as the primary research group responsible for the data analysis and Fordham University School of Social Services to implement the needs assessment projected for completion by early 1990.

This project represents the collaborative efforts of many people from both the public and private sectors. With this publication, detailed information is now available on the Tri-State Region's Asian American population.

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INTRODUCTION

The New York/New Jersey/Connecticut Urban Region is home to 20 million people of vastly diverse backgrounds. This report, one of several profiling the Region's ethnic populations, was prepared for the Asian American Advisory Committee and the United Way of Tri-State by the Regional Plan Association. Funding was provided by the Exxon Foundation, Sally Wong Leung, the New York Life Foundation, Primerica Foundation and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

The Region is a world-class center of cultural and international corporate and financial decision-making. It provides ten million jobs, produces 11 percent of the gross national product and has one of the highest average per capita incomes in the United States. Centered on the Manhattan Central Business District, the Region encompasses 13,000 square miles in 31 counties united by a hub-bound transportation system into a common labor and housing market. It is also a major point of entry for immigrants and the home of one of the largest Asian American communities in the United States.

The purpose of this study is the establishment of a base of information for the assessment of the social service needs of the Tri-State Region's Asian American population. In this study, the definition of Asian American is limited to those persons with ancestral ties to the Pacific Rim countries: China, the Philippines, Korea, Japan, Indochina and Southeast Asia. Asian Indians, Pakistanis, Other Southwest and Middle East Asians have not been included. The base, which contains previously unavailable Census data and post-Census trends, depicts the present and likely future size of the Asian American population, its settlement patterns and its socio-economic characteristics. The complete data base resides with the Regional Plan Association and the Asian American Advisory Committee.

Because the growth of the Region's Asian American population is so dynamic, the data obtained from the Census and post-Census supplements may not be fully accurate. There are differences in the population estimates offered by the Regional Plan Association and the Asian American Advisory Committee. While the study estimates that Asian Americans make up two percent of the Tri-State Region's population, some Asian American community leaders suggest that the figure could be substantially higher. Though the present study is based upon the Census data, immigration and other vital statistics, it nevertheless reflects the social characteristics of the Tri-State Asian American population.

It is our hope that this study lays a firm foundation for the better understanding and development of human resources for the Asian American population in the Tri-State Region. A second study, already underway, will use this data to assess the Asian American community's human service needs.

We would like to know how you have used the study findings. Please write to us at:

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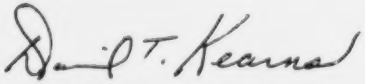
New York, NY 10013



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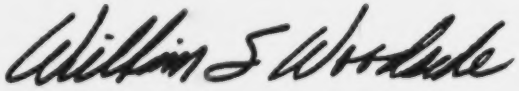

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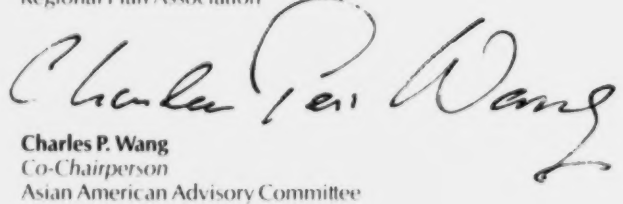


Charles P. Wang
Co-Chairperson
Asian American Advisory Committee

Lily Wong
Co-Chairperson
Asian American Advisory Committee

BACKGROUND

Early Chinese immigrants established Chinatown in New York City 130 years ago. They were followed by the Japanese, the Filipinos and a small number of Koreans and the Other Pacific Islanders. But as the American economy fluctuated between growth and decline, each Asian group was successively subjected to similar difficulties of assimilation and discrimination as their predecessors: Native Americans, Afro-Americans, Eastern and Southern European immigrants and Latino-Americans. These problems were particularly evident during periods of economic crisis in the United States. The Chinese were excluded from entering the United States in 1882, the Japanese in 1924 and the Filipinos (once American nationals) in 1934. In fact, Asians did not receive the right to become citizens until after 1943.

In the 1900's the Chinese followed their first forebears to Mott and Canal Streets in New York City and then to Brooklyn, Queens and Long Island. After World War II, the Japanese, relocating in the East from detention camps in the desert, established homes in Upper Manhattan and Washington Heights. Business representatives from flourishing Japanese companies settled in Bergen County, New Jersey. After 1950, the professional and small business entrepreneurs like the Korean "green grocer," "fishstore proprietor" and the Chinese restaurant owner became part of the urban Asian American community; finally the Vietnamese, Cambodians and Laotians established their small settlements.

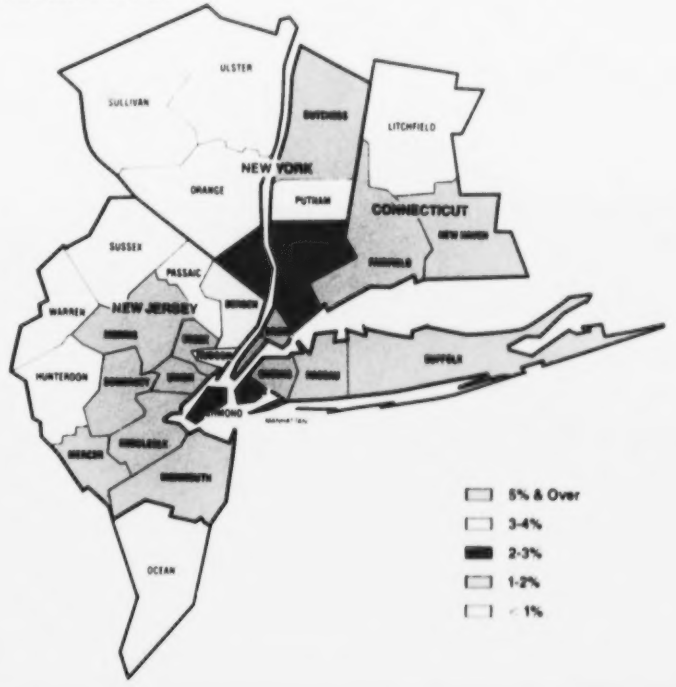
The liberalization of the United States immigration laws in 1965, the enactment of the Refugee Act and the end of the Korean and Vietnam Wars dramatically stimulated Asian population growth. Though historically, Asian Americans have chosen the West Coast as their major port of entry, the recovery of New York City and the Tri-State Region's economy over the past ten years have influenced their migration patterns. These new immigrants brought with them many languages, dialects, cultures and racial mixtures. Like so many before them, they hoped for a better life and future for their children and a piece of the "American dream."

This study presents key findings regarding Asian American family life, education, housing and economic well-being that can be used for the analysis of the present and future needs of the Asian American population.

THE ASIAN AMERICAN PRESENCE IN THE TRI-STATE REGION

- The one-half million members of the Tri-State Asian American community reside in every county and borough of the Region.*
- The largest Asian American community is in New York City. In 1987, the city was home to 306,000 Asian Americans, or 61 percent of the Region's total Asian population. The Asian American Advisory Committee believes this number may be substantially larger because of the city's census undercount and undocumented aliens.

ASIANS AS A % OF TOTAL POPULATION
BY COUNTY IN 1987

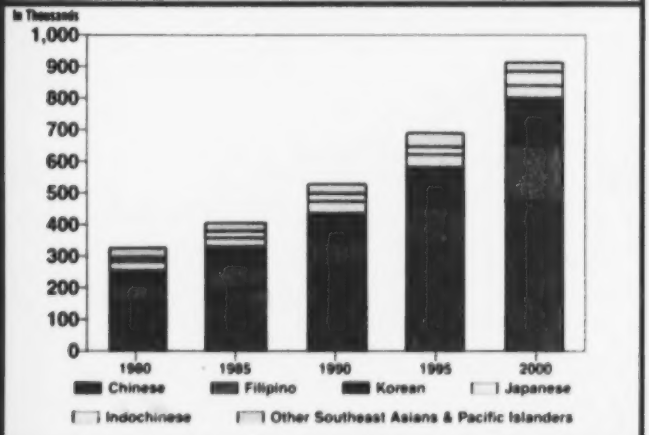


INCREASE IN ASIAN POPULATION
BY COUNTY, 1970-87

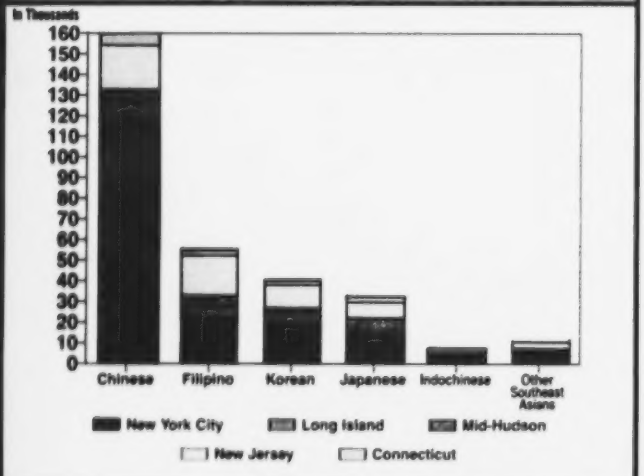
- The second largest Asian American community is in northern New Jersey, where 105,000 or one-fifth of the total Asian American population lives.
- Smaller concentrations of Asian Americans are located on Long Island, in the Mid-Hudson area and in western Connecticut.

**In this study "Asian American" includes Asians from the Pacific Rim countries, but does not include Indians, Pakistanis or Other Southwest and Middle East Asians. The Tri-State Region includes southern New York, northern New Jersey and western Connecticut.*

GROWTH OF ASIAN POPULATION
IN THE TRI-STATE REGION, 1980-2000



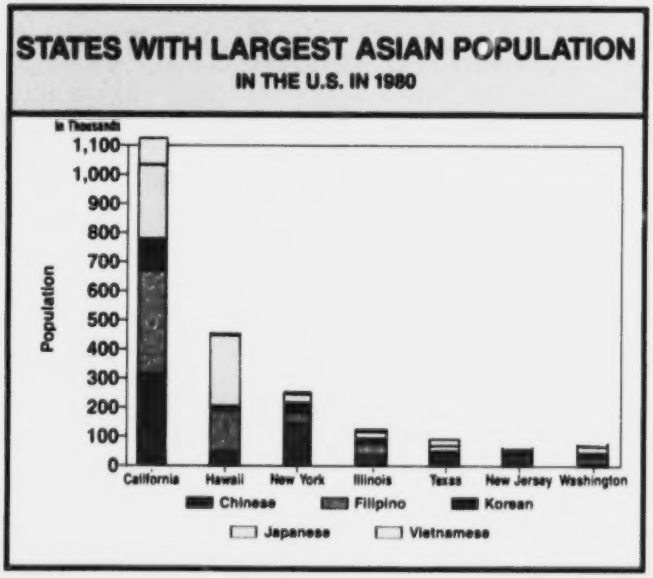
POPULATION BY ETHNICITY
IN THE TRI-STATE REGION IN 1980



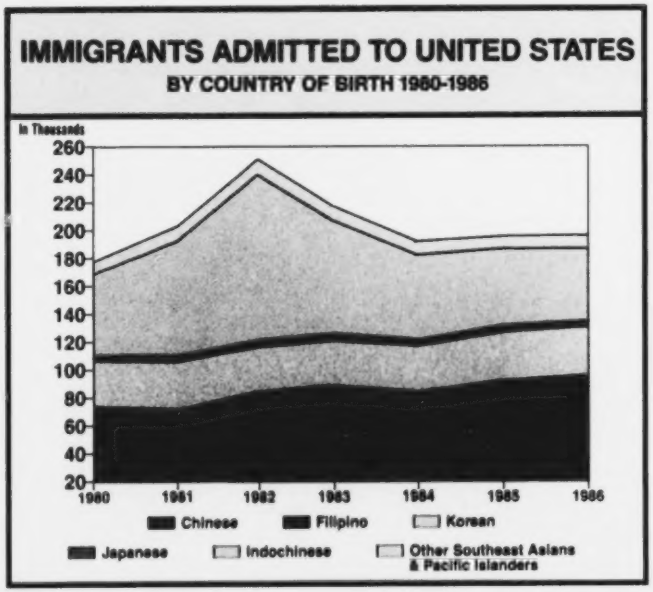
GROWTH AND DIVERSITY OF THE TRI-STATE ASIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

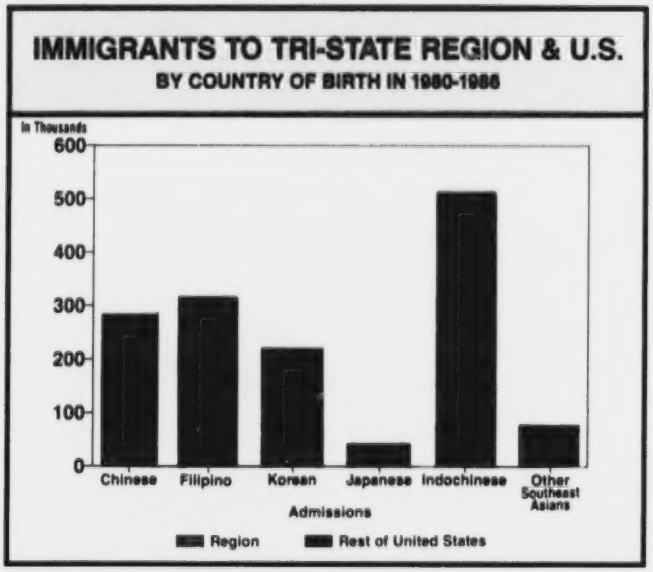
The Tri-State Region's Asian American community has experienced phenomenal growth. Between 1980 and 1990, approximately 210,000 persons will be added to the total, accounting for 2.6 percent of the Tri-State population. These numbers parallel the substantial Asian American national growth rate (from 1.4 million in 1970 to approximately five million at present). It is projected that by the year 2000 there will be one million Asian Americans in the Region, representing nearly five percent of the Tri-State's population and 33 percent of all new population growth in the Region.

- The majority of Asian Americans continue to identify strongly with their ethnic backgrounds. The Region's diverse Asian American community can be divided into six subgroups, based on 1980 Census data:
  - — Chinese (51 percent)
  - — Filipino (18 percent)
  - — Korean (13 percent)
  - — Japanese (11 percent)
  - — Indochinese, including Vietnamese, Laotians and Cambodians (2 percent)
  - — Other Asian Americans, including Other Southeast Asians, Hawaiians, Samoans and Eurasians (5 percent)



- Nationwide, 5.3 percent of all Asian Americans live in California and Hawaii. Approximately 11.4 percent of all Asian Americans live in the Tri-State Region.
- Chinese Americans are the most urbanized of all Asian groups in the Region, with the highest concentrations in New York City. Indochinese are the least likely to settle in urban centers. More than one-half of all Koreans and Other Southeast Asians live in New York, while two out of five Filipinos and Japanese live in the city, the remainder living in the suburbs.





THE DYNAMIC GROWTH OF THE ASIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Immigration is the major force in the rapid growth of the Asian American population.

Several major factors have contributed to the phenomenal growth of the Region's Asian American community: the abolition of the national origin quota system in favor of giving preference to the unification of family groups living in the United States; the granting to all Asian groups the right to citizenship by naturalization; the Refugee Act, which gave refugees a separate quota set annually by Congress and the President; and a natural population increase resulting from births outnumbering deaths.

Key Findings:

IMMIGRATION

- Between 1970 and 1980, a decade in which the total population of the United States increased by 11 percent, the Asian American population increased by more than 100 percent, reaching three million in 1980.
- Asian immigration to the United States from the Pacific Rim increased from ten percent of total United States immigration in 1961-1970 to 36 percent in 1980-1986, surpassing the 27 percent legal immigration from Latin America (excluding the West Indies).

Chinese—The first Asians to arrive in the United States are currently the nation's largest Asian subgroup. By the end of the century, however, Chinese Americans will lose this standing to the Filipino Americans, who have a far higher growth rate. In the Region, Chinese will remain the largest group, increasing from 160,000 to 450,000 by the year 2000. Over the 1980-1986 period, 283,000 Chinese immigrants were admitted to the United States, 60,000 of whom settled in the Tri-State Region.

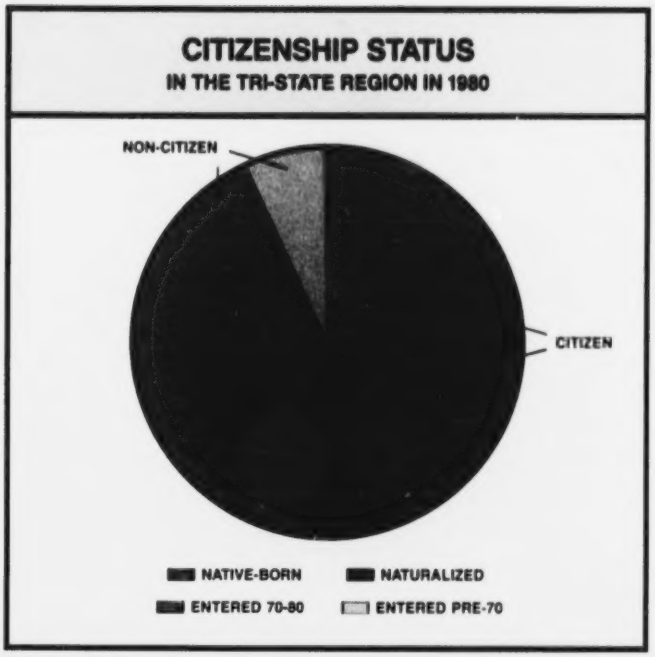
Filipinos—The United States annexed the Philippines in 1898 and until 1934 Filipinos were allowed to move freely into the country as United States nationals. Subsequently, they were restricted to 100 immigrants per year. Currently, Filipinos are the second largest Asian subgroup in the nation and the Region. They are expected to be first nationally by the end of the century, but will remain second in rank size regionally, growing from 55,000 to 170,000 in the period 1980-2000. Between 1980 and 1986, 316,000 Filipinos emigrated to the United States, only 23,500 of whom settled in the Region.

Koreans—The third largest Asian subgroup in the Region is expected to outpace its national growth by quadrupling over the 1980-2000 period, from 40,000 to 162,000 persons. Throughout the United States, the Korean community is expected to grow by one million persons. Between 1980 and 1986, 234,000 Koreans were admitted to the United States, ten percent of whom settled in the Region.

Japanese—The Japanese are expected to be one of the smallest Asian subgroups in the United States by the end of the century, increasing by only 20 percent. In the Region, however, Japanese are projected to grow by 39 percent, from 33,000 to 46,000 by the year 2000. Only 28,000 Japanese were admitted to the United States as immigrants (business people on temporary stay are non-immigrants, but are counted in the Census) between 1980 and 1986, and eight percent of these settled in the Region. Two-thirds of the Japanese in the Region or their family members are employees of Japanese companies.

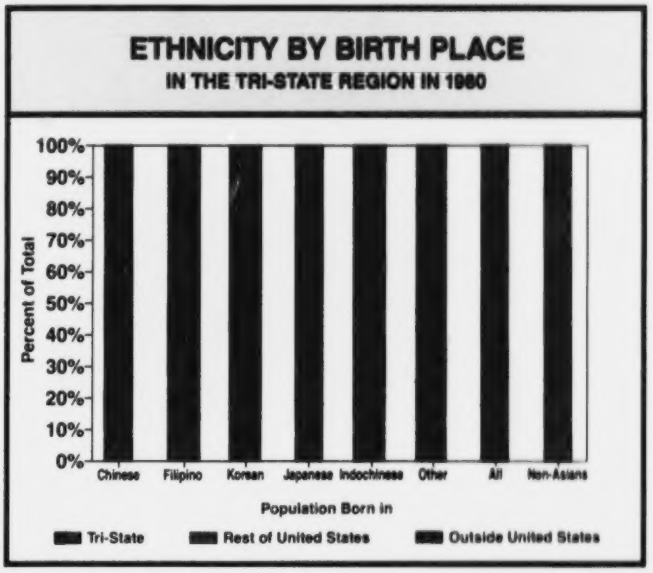
Indochinese—Vietnamese, Laotians and Cambodians, the most recent new immigrants in the Region, have the highest growth rate, increasing by over 200 percent between 1980 and 1985. Nationally, their population grew from 308,752 to 1,013,400. Between 1980 and 1986, 514,000 were admitted to the United States, some as refugees, but less than two percent settled in the Region. With continuing immigration and high rates of natural increase, their regional numbers are expected to grow from 7,700 in 1980 to 43,000 by the year 2000.

Other Southeast Asians—Some 60,000 immigrants from Thailand, Indonesia, and elsewhere in Southeast Asia have arrived in the United States since 1980, 3,000 of whom have settled in the Region. Between 1980 and the year 2000, this Asian subgroup is projected to grow from 13,000 to 30,000 in the Tri-State Region.



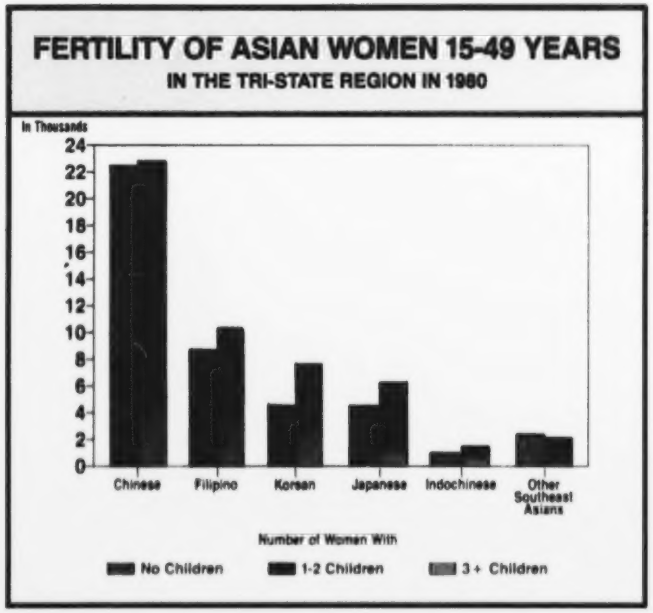
CITIZENSHIP

Half of the Region's Asian American population has citizenship by birth or naturalization. The majority of recent immigrants do not have the right to vote. Asians appear to apply for citizenship more rapidly after admission than the other ethnic groups in the Tri-State Region.



ETHNICITY BY BIRTH PLACE

- In 1980, three out of every four Asian Americans in the Tri-State Region were foreign-born. In contrast, 18 percent of non-Asian Americans were foreign-born.
- Trends since 1980 suggest that the proportion of Asian Americans born abroad has increased. Indochinese and Koreans, who have accounted for one-third of the Region's Asian immigrants in this decade, have a greater proportion of the foreign-born than the Japanese, Filipino and Chinese Americans. The latter groups have more native-born members because of their earlier immigration to the United States.



CHARACTERISTICS OF ASIAN AMERICAN FAMILY LIFE

Key Findings:

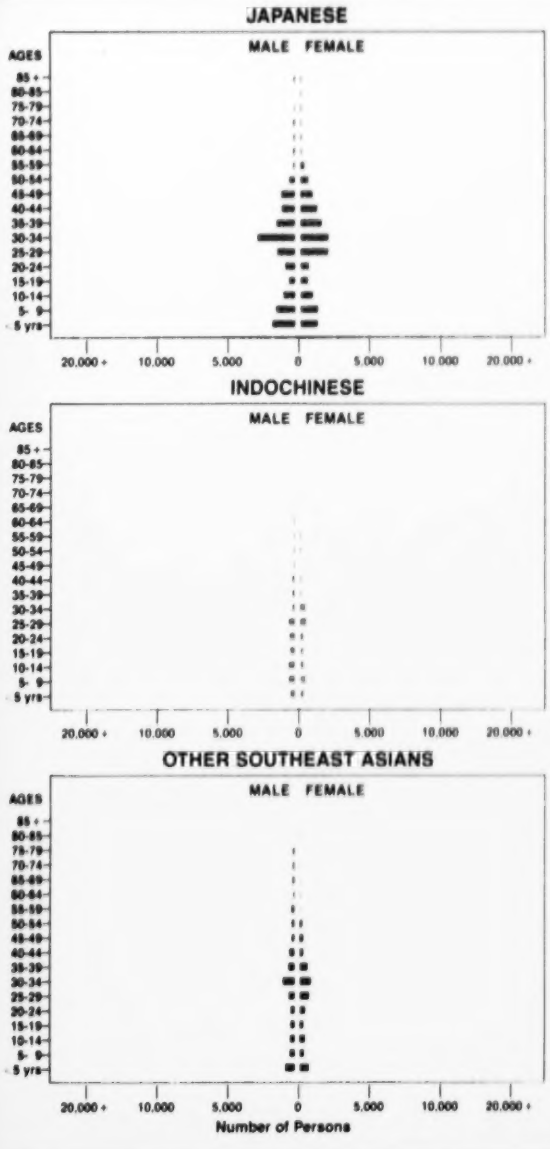
NATURAL INCREASE

- The margin of births over deaths accounts for some of the Asian American community's gain in recent years. It is estimated that about 50,000 Asian American children will have been born in the Region between 1980 and 1989, while less than 20,000 deaths will occur, for a natural increase of over 30,000.
- Fertility rates among most Asian American women fall below white fertility rates. In 1980, Japanese, Chinese, Korean and Filipino women recorded from one-third to one-tenth fewer births than white women. Only the Indochinese exceeded white fertility rates.
- The highest proportion of childbearing women, among all women of reproductive age (15 to 49), is to be found among the Indochinese (68 percent) and Koreans (62 percent). In 1980, only 50 percent of the Region's Chinese women of childbearing age had borne children, but one-third of these had borne three or more children.
- Natural population increase among Asian Americans is approximately one percent per year; for every thousand Asian Americans, there are fourteen births and five deaths yearly. Asian Americans appear to live longer than other Americans. The primary causes of death are heart disease and cancer, accounting for two of every three Asian deaths.

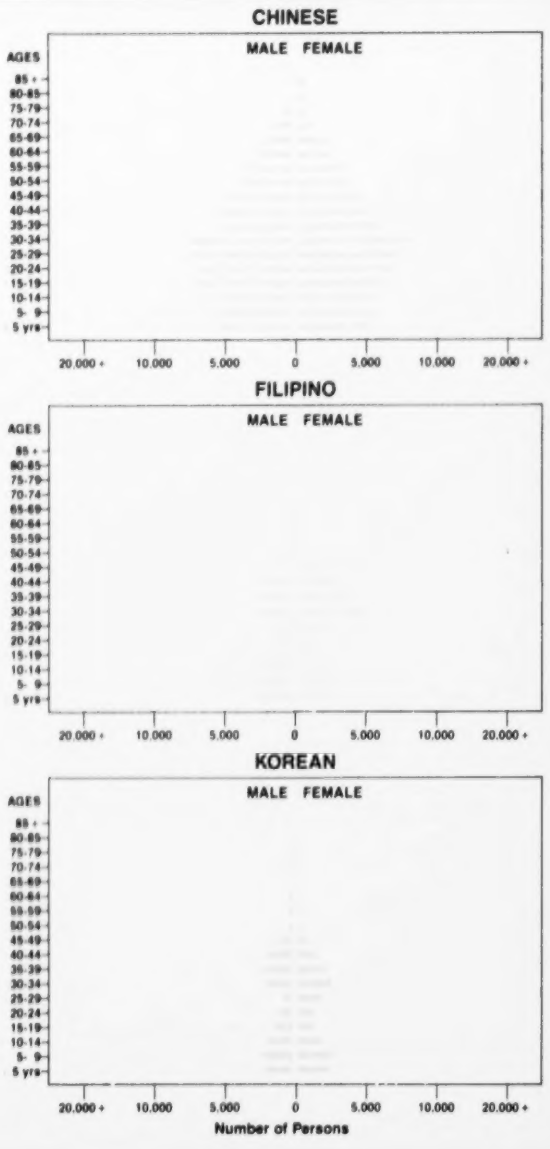
AGE AND SEX

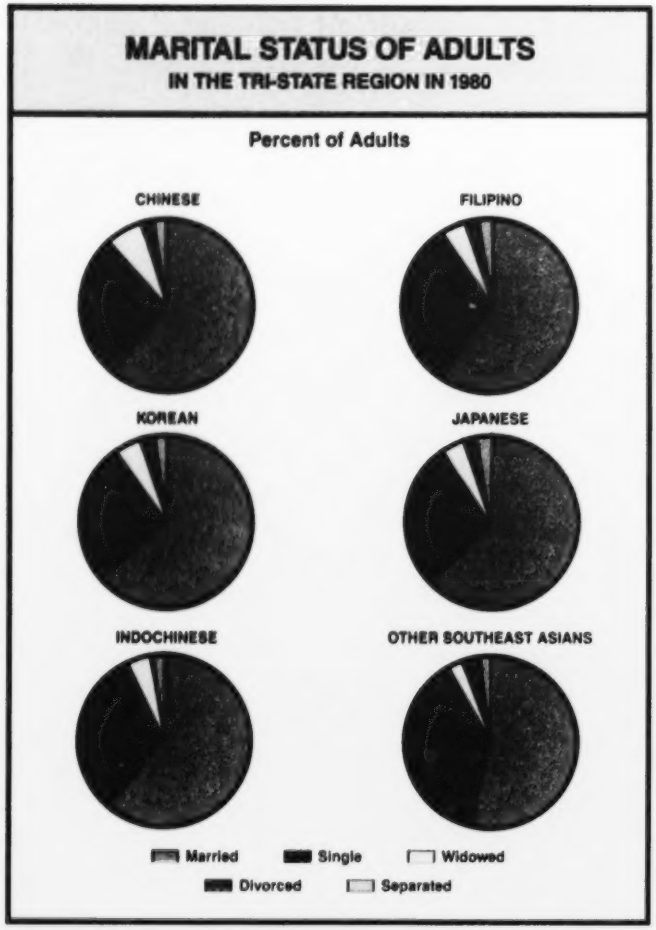
- There are slightly more Asian American females than males residing in the Region. The greatest disparity occurs among Filipinos, among whom women outnumber men by a larger margin, and among Indochinese where men outnumber women. The disparity among Filipinos may be due to the recruitment of Filipino nurses by regional hospitals, while the Indochinese and Chinese may have more males because of selective emigration among refugees and earlier immigrants.
- The majority of all Asian Americans, or 61 percent, are adults between the ages of 20 and 65. The Japanese have the highest proportion of adult-aged population, while the Chinese have the greatest share of the elderly. Eight percent of the Chinese are over 65 years of age.
- In 1980, the Koreans and Indochinese had the highest proportion of persons under 20 years of age, comprising 41 and 47 percent respectively.

POPULATION BY SEX & ETHNICITY
IN THE TRI-STATE REGION IN 1980



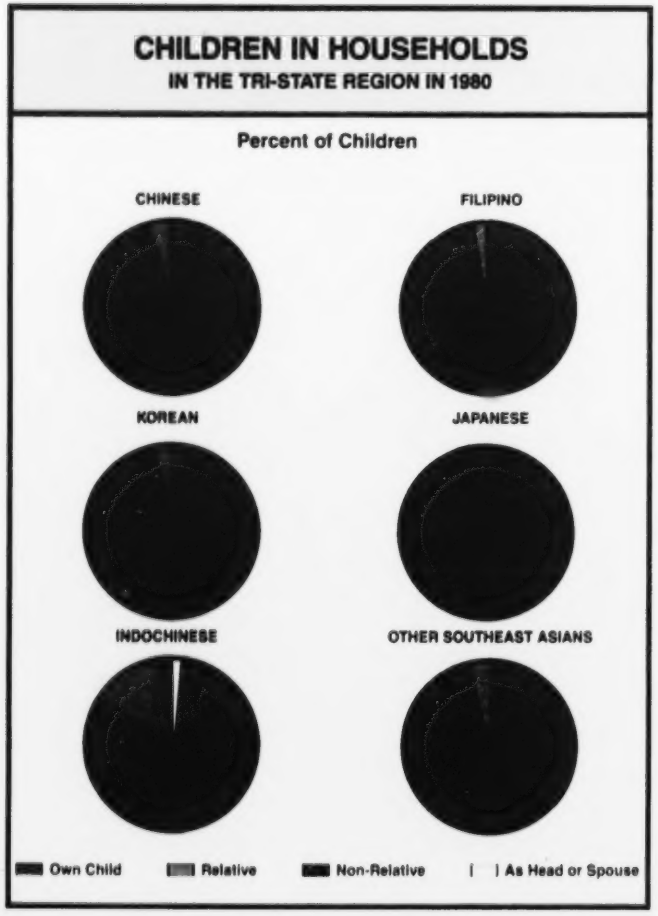
POPULATION BY SEX & ETHNICITY
IN THE TRI-STATE REGION IN 1980





MARITAL PATTERNS

- Three out of five Asian American adults are married. Fewer than one in ten are widowed, separated or divorced. More men than women are single, and most singles are under the age of 25.
- The proportion of marriages are most prevalent among Koreans and Japanese, and less prevalent among Other Southeast Asians. Filipino women and Indochinese men have the highest proportions of unmarried individuals.
- One in every five Chinese and Korean males is single and under 25 years of age, the highest proportion among ethnic groups with the exception of the Indochinese. Across all Asian communities, except Other Southeast Asians, women tend to marry earlier than men.



CHILDREN IN THE HOUSEHOLD

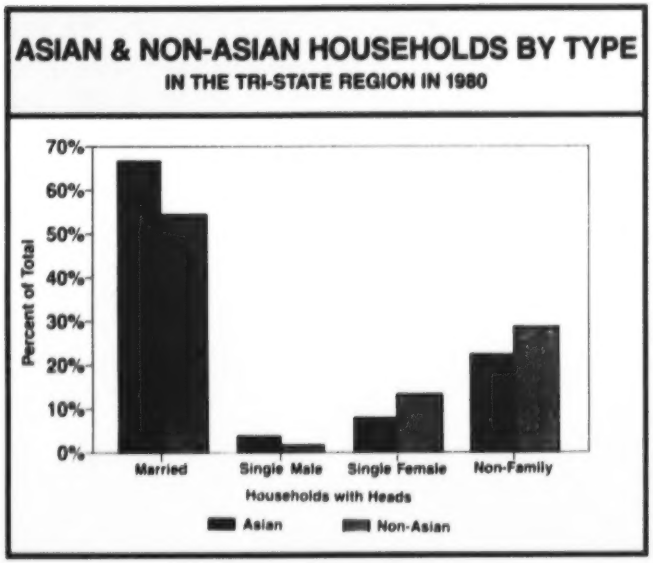
The overwhelming majority of Asian American children under age 18 live with their parents. Asian families rarely house nieces and nephews or other blood-related children. Only Indochinese families have a relatively high proportion of related (other than their own children) and non-related children living in their households.

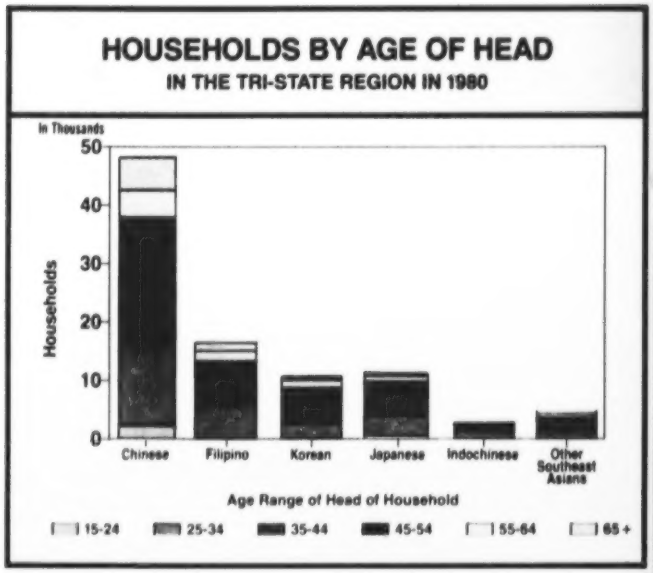
HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND TYPE

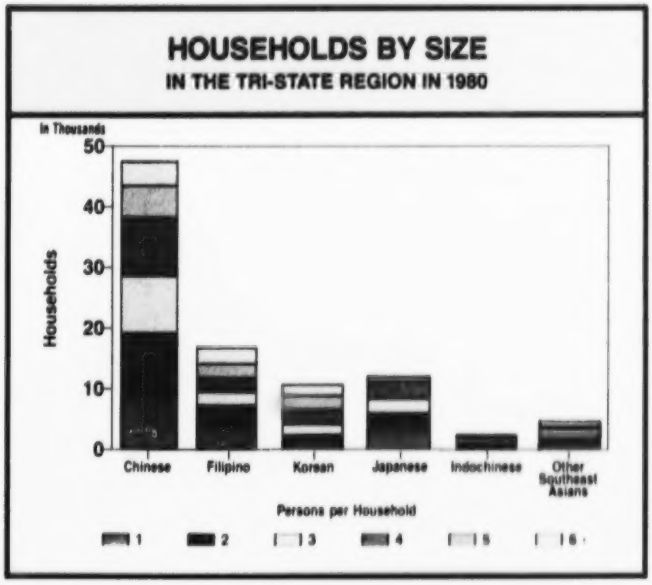
Data shows that Asian Americans are less prone than other ethnic groups to family separation.

- In the Region, male heads and married couples represent more than 70 percent of all households surveyed and most were working persons between the ages of 25 and 50. By contrast, married couples in the non-Asian American community make up only 56 percent of all households.
- Indochinese Americans have the largest households. Over 50 percent of all units surveyed were composed of five or more persons, with the average household having 4.6 persons. The average Korean and Chinese household consists of 3.9 and 3.2 persons, respectively.
- Japanese have the smallest households. The mean size is 2.9 persons, a figure almost identical to that of the average white family in the nation. The Japanese also have the highest proportion of single persons living alone (one in every nine units). In contrast, only one in every twenty Korean households is composed of a single person.
- Among Korean and Chinese American households, seven out of ten are headed by married couples and five out of six of these are headed by a male.

(See charts on next page.)

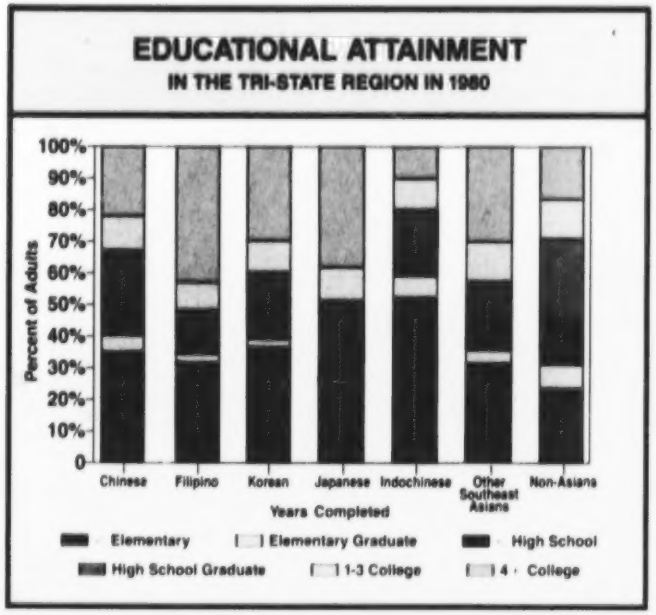


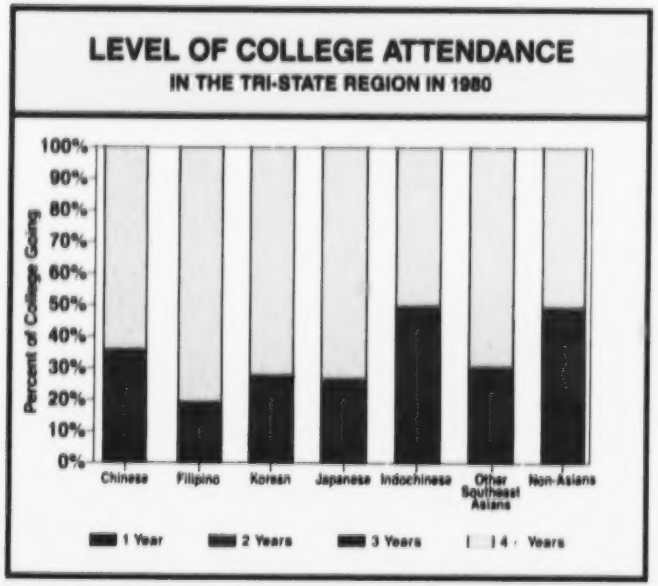




SUBFAMILIES

- The largest proportion of subfamilies (separate but related families living in the household) is found among Filipinos and Other Southeast Asian subgroups.
- Dramatic changes are emerging in the Filipino American community as relatively large numbers of non-family and female-headed family households are formed, primarily by persons in the 25 to 34 year old age group. This contrasts sharply with larger households usually headed by Filipino males above the age of 35. Twenty-five percent of all Filipino Americans live in households with six or more persons.





EDUCATIONAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF ASIAN AMERICANS

Educational Characteristics

Key Findings:

LANGUAGE

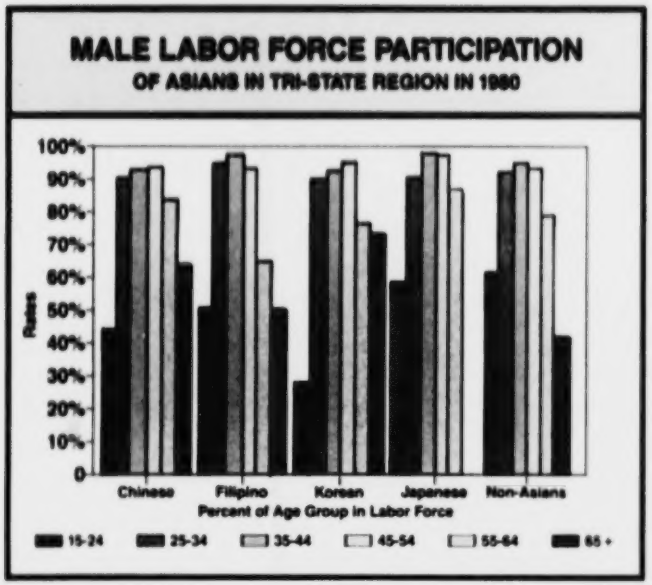
The many Asian dialects and languages spoken in the Pacific Rim nations bear little or no relationship to English or the Romance languages. Many Asians, despite their educational attainments in their native homeland, have limited English speaking ability.

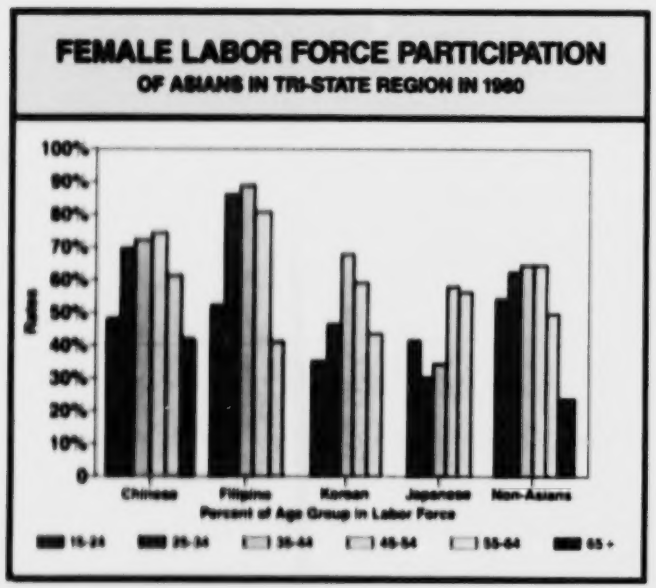
- Nearly 23 percent of those surveyed are not proficient in speaking English, with seven percent speaking no English at all. Approximately five percent of all Koreans and two percent of Japanese surveyed do not speak the language. However, since the Philippines was once an American colony, less than 0.5 percent of all Filipinos cannot speak English.
- Language requirements for citizenship impede many Asians from becoming United States citizens.

EDUCATION

Much has been written about the Asian American students: their high scholastic achievement, inner-directed discipline, and strong family ethos which stresses scholarship and the development of the mind. However, there is also a sizable Asian American adult population with less than elementary school education.

- While nationally 89 percent of the white population aged 16 and 17 were in school in 1980, over 90 percent of all major Asian American youth groups were enrolled. The averages were as high as 96 percent for Japanese and Chinese American youth.
- Two in every five Asian Americans in the Region have attended college and one in every four has a college diploma.
- The Japanese and Filipino communities have the highest levels of educational attainment, with more than half of their members reporting some college education.
- Those who lack an elementary education are primarily Chinese and Indochinese immigrants, females and the elderly.
- Among Asians with some college education, college attainment is highest among those between the ages of 15 and 24 and declines precipitously for those 45 years of age and older. Although the percentage of Asian adults in the Region who have attended college is smaller than that of non-Asians, the percentage of Asians attending college and graduating is higher (71 percent compared to the non-Asians 52 percent).
- Although in general women have a lower college-attendance rate than men, half of all Filipino women are college graduates, making them the most highly educated group in the Region's Asian American community. As of 1980, 43 percent of all Filipinos residing in the Region had college diplomas, followed by 37 percent of all Japanese.





Economic Characteristics

Key Findings:

Asians work longer hours than the general population, often in restaurants, garment factories, small groceries and fish and produce markets.

Underemployment, or the lack of full participation in the economy by skill and educational levels, is a serious economic problem faced by Asian Americans, particularly the new immigrants.

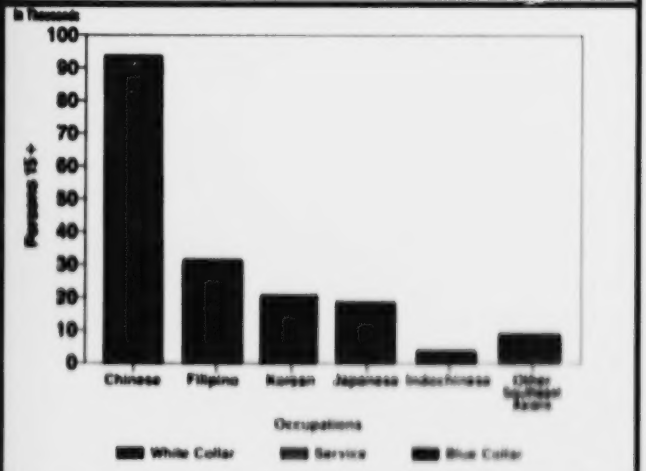
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

- There are more workers in regional Asian households (1.65) than in non-Asian ones (1.3). The labor force participation rate (the proportion of working-age population at work or actively seeking employment) is the same for Asian and non-Asian men, but higher for Asian than non-Asian women.
- The rate of Korean and Indochinese participation in the Region's labor force is lower than that of other Asian Americans, with the exception of Japanese females.
- In addition to language, factors such as labor demand also play a role in determining employment. In general, the Tri-State Region has lost blue-collar opportunities for unskilled laborers with limited language proficiency.
- Among Asian men, four out of five hold jobs. Japanese males have the highest participation rate, particularly those between 35 and 54 years of age. For those over the age of 16, 90 percent are employed or seeking work. Among Asian women, the highest participation rate occurs among Chinese and Filipino Americans; more than two of every three are in the labor force.

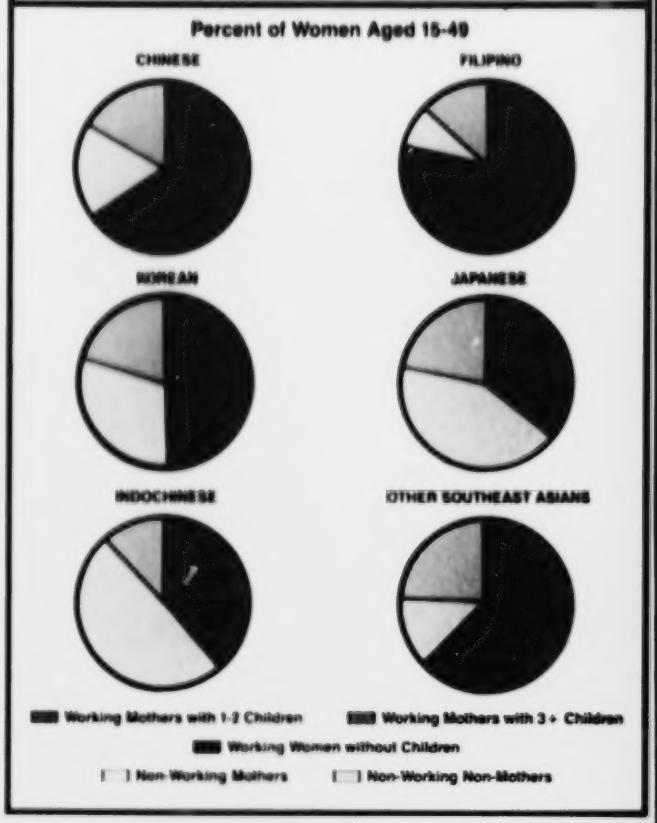
OCCUPATIONS

- One-third of all Asians are managers or professionals, and roughly one-fifth are employed in blue-collar occupations. Technical, sales, administrative and service occupations, or mid-level skills, engage the largest and remaining share. Most Filipinos, Koreans and Japanese are white-collar workers.
- Despite high scholastic achievement in Asian schools prior to their arrival in the Region, many Asian Americans are employed in family businesses and in garment factories and restaurants. Only ten percent work in government, as compared to 17 percent of non-Asians.
- Asian immigrants tend to experience a sharp downward mobility in employment after coming to the United States. The inconsistency between income and education is pervasive but particularly strong among Asians who have difficulty with English.

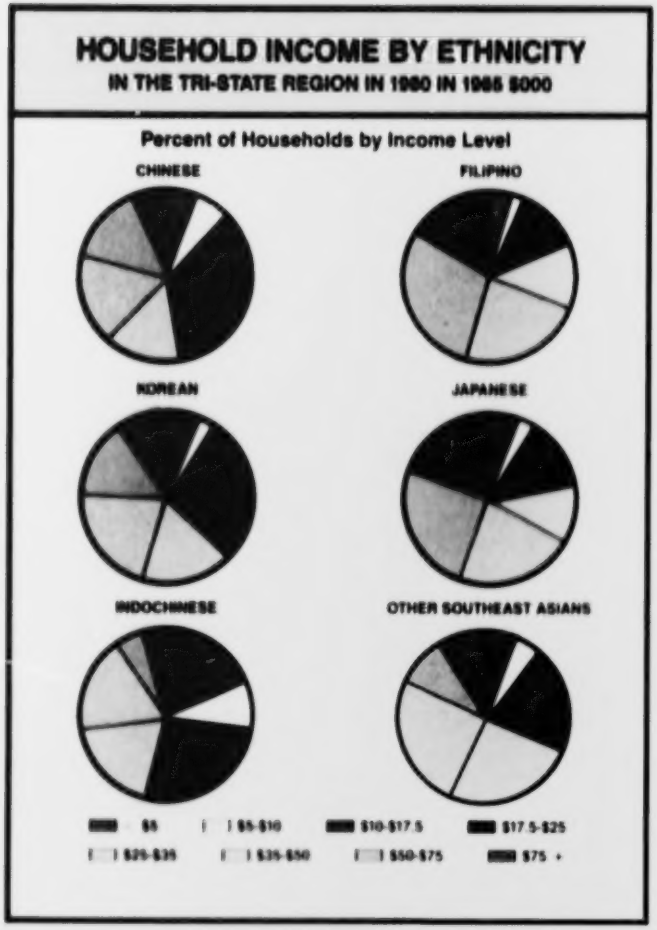
OCCUPATIONS BY ETHNICITY
IN THE TRI-STATE REGION IN 1980



EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF ASIAN WOMEN
IN THE TRI-STATE REGION IN 1980

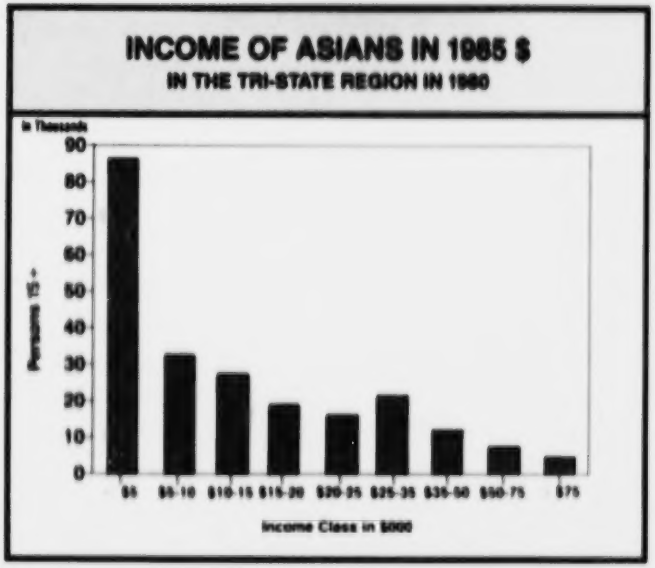


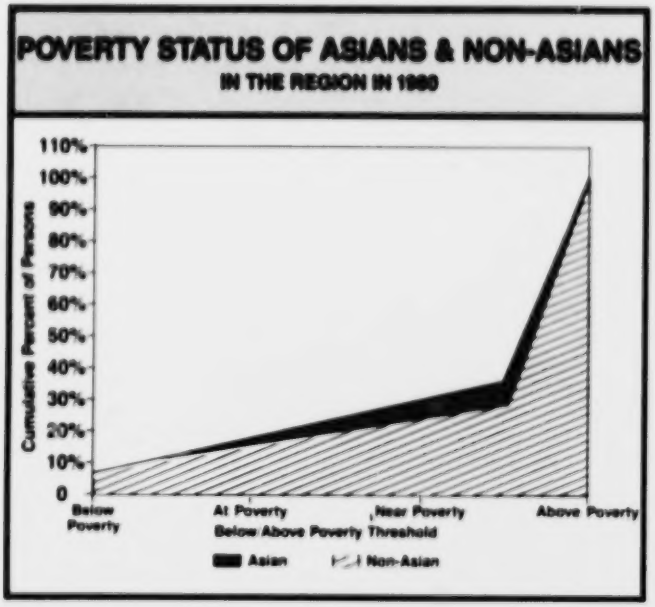
- Asian Americans enter a regional labor force which is becoming less blue-collar and more white-collar.
- Asian business enterprises are small in scale, and concentrated in retail trades that deal with a narrow range of goods and services.
- In the Chinese and Filipino communities, more women tend to assume the dual role of worker and mother. For the Japanese, Indochinese and to a lesser extent Koreans, women rearing children tend not to work.



INCOME

- Most household heads are gainfully employed. One in three families has one wage earner, half of all families have two wage earners and the remainder have three or more wage earners. Most work in private industry or are self-employed. Koreans and Filipinos record the highest rates of self-employment.



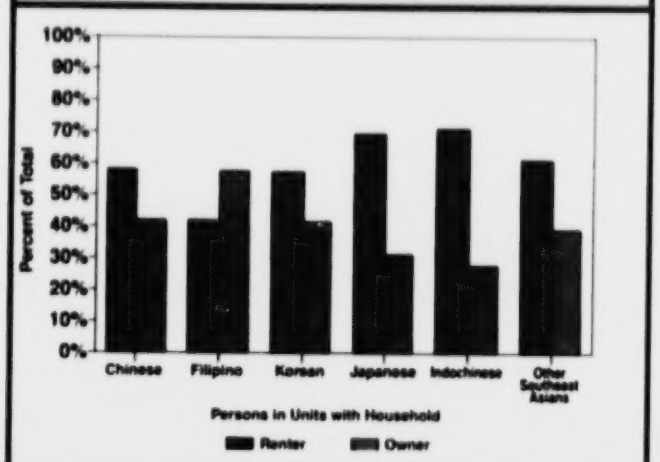


- Reported earnings (expressed in 1985 dollars) of persons 15 years of age and over suggest that Filipinos and Japanese had the highest median incomes per person ($16,100 and $18,570, respectively). Fourteen percent of Japanese adults received over $50,000 in income per year; for all Asians, four percent received more than $50,000.

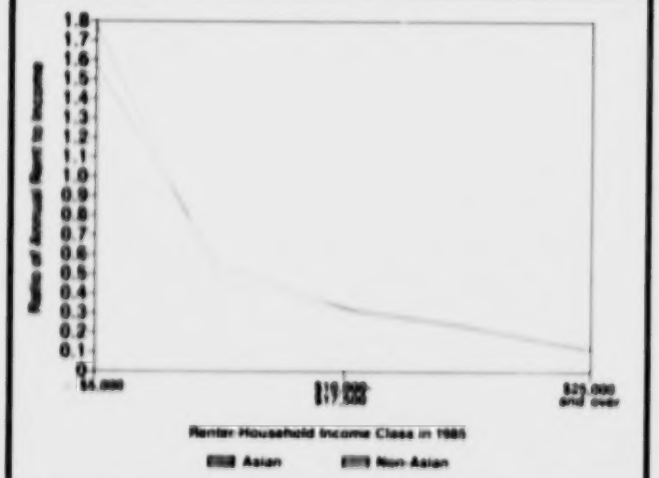
- Many Asian Americans live in poverty, which affects one in every three Indochinese, one in six Chinese, one in seven Koreans, one in ten Japanese and one in fourteen Filipinos. In 1979, it was estimated that, nationally, 36 percent of all Vietnamese Americans lived below the poverty level. Surveys suggest that poverty is also widespread among Asian elderly. However, with increasing lengths of stay, the income distribution of Asian immigrants shows a marked improvement.

- The incidence of poverty differs by household type, size and the presence of children. Typically, female headed households, large families and households with children are the poorest. However, few Asians apply for public assistance.

HOUSING TENURE BY ETHNICITY
IN THE TRI-STATE REGION IN 1980



RENT/INCOME OF ASIAN & NON-ASIAN
HOUSEHOLDS IN THE REGION IN 1980 IN 1985 $



HOUSING CONDITIONS OF THE ASIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Like other immigrants before them, newly arrived Asian Americans at first join relatives and neighbors in the tenements of urban areas.

Key Findings:

- New York City's Chinatown is known for the age of its buildings (3,000 existing structures were constructed before 1900), the overcrowding of families in walk-ups without adequate plumbing and heating and its high rents.
- Following the liberalization of immigration in 1965, Asian Americans began living outside Chinatown, usually near friends and relatives where they could best buy ethnic food and communicate in their own language.
- Within these submarkets, housing characteristics vary considerably by ancestry group. Chinese and Filipinos are more heavily concentrated in single family and small walk-up housing than Koreans and Japanese, who tend to live in large multi-family structures.
- More Chinese and Filipino Americans own homes than do the Indochinese or Japanese. Japanese tend to rent, since about two-thirds of their members are here on business assignments.
- The bulk of all units rented by Japanese exceeds $600 in monthly rentals, while a majority of those occupied by Indochinese is priced under $400 per month in 1985 dollars.

IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMAN SERVICES

Asian Americans have many of the same needs as the general population. The particular needs of the Asian population focus on language and the lack of opportunities based on racial discrimination. Utilizing the data of this study, the following priority needs can be identified.

LANGUAGE

The language barrier is a major disabling factor in the Asian American's effort to make successful educational, occupational and psychological adjustments to American society. Intensive instruction in English as a second language will improve the opportunities of immigrants "to succeed" in the United States.

EDUCATION

The vast majority of Asian American children face language difficulties in the classroom. Many have parents who are non-English speaking and cannot help with homework. In addition, there is a lack of bilingual teachers and guidance counselors employed by the educational system, especially in the school districts of the outer boroughs. Bilingual educational programs and after school remedial education with bilingual educators must be forcefully pursued in Asian American communities.

BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

Asian Americans tend to be employed primarily in a limited range of businesses and occupations. Competition among Asian restaurants, laundries and green grocers is strong, often leading to closings of businesses and unemployment. Economic advancement programs, low interest loans and technical training programs would assist in this area.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

With almost 2,000 Asians coming to the Tri-State Region every month, affordable housing is one of the most pressing needs. The public and private sectors should initiate special efforts to address the housing needs of Asian Americans, especially the elderly and refugees, who have the most difficulty.

CHILD-CARE CENTERS

The high percentage of working mothers among Asians makes child care an important issue. Currently, most of the day care centers serving Asians have long waiting lists and facilities to house new centers are not readily available, suggesting a strong need for additional child-care center services.

FAMILY SERVICE CENTERS

As Asian American families confront the pressures of surviving in the Tri-State Region's Urban areas, the breakdown of family traditions is inevitable. Centers for family counseling and emergency services specializing in problems of Asian Americans are needed.

HEALTH PROBLEMS

Community-based organizations that focus on the health problems of Asian Americans should be supported.

Bilingual and bicultural staff are critical for hospitals in areas servicing large Asian populations. Institutions should also provide their non-Asian personnel with training in Asian cultural values.

THE ROLE OF THE CHINESE-AMERICAN PLANNING COUNCIL

CPC is a service, planning and coordinating organization that responds to the needs of the ethnic Chinese populations in the Greater New York Area.

It engages in activities in the following areas:

- social, human and educational services;
- business and economic development;
- arts and culture;
- fostering civic responsibility; and
- fostering advancement in the public and private sectors.

Services are available to all Chinese. While the organization continues its commitment to meeting the needs of low income, newly arrived immigrants and the non-English speaking population, it will expand its programs and emphasis in the areas of economic/business development and arts and cultural programs for the broader Chinese community. In particular, CPC will seek to increase Chinese representation in currently under-represented areas.

In addition, the organization plays a national leadership role in:

- advocating in the areas of public and social policy;
- technical assistance and consultation to other organizations and communities;
- planning; and
- coordinating and "networking" related to its leadership role with other communities and organizations, including integration of public, private, and not-for-profit efforts which benefit the Chinese community and the public at large.

A basic tool for achieving CPC's mission and goals is the development of factual data, information and publications which will support public policy and other activities.

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THE ROLE OF UNITED WAYS*

- United Ways play a pivotal role in helping the community to identify, ameliorate and where possible, resolve local human care problems.
- United Ways strive for inclusiveness in governance, operations and allocations, as represented by the inclusion of: people, especially women and minorities; agencies, especially those that meet new and emerging needs; and geographic service areas, encompassing where people live, work and are served.
- United Ways manage a single community-wide campaign to raise funds for human care services.
- United Ways conduct a year-round communications program of education and involvement in the community, with special emphasis on the work-place.
- United Ways' funds are distributed through a community allocations system that is accountable through the donor, responsive to people's needs and inclusive of programs to which givers wish to contribute. A flexible funding capacity can also be established by setting aside funds for venture project funding and long-term community problem-solving initiatives.

*United Way of America: Rethinking Tomorrow and Beyond. Alexandria, Va.: United Way of America, 1985.

United Way of Tri-State is a fundraising partnership of 36 local, independent United Ways in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, which together support more than 1800 health and human care agencies.

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THE ROLE OF REGIONAL PLAN ASSOCIATION

- Regional Plan takes a long-term regional view in assessing economic and social change and its impact on human needs.
- Regional Plan conducts economic and other forms of research, communicating the results to decision-makers in all walks of the Region's life.
- Regional Plan sponsors extensive public discussions to increase people's awareness and involvement in shaping the future of the Tri-State Region.
- Regional Plan alerts Tri-State residents to the broader implications of economic and social issues, proposing new public policies.
- Regional Plan organizes active public/private partnerships to pave the way for improvements in special communities.

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From the Regional Plan Association, Richard Anderson was deeply committed to the project and Regina Armstrong had primary responsibility for putting the data analysis and chart presentations together. Her professionalism and patience with the committee assured the success of the project.

From the advisory committee, Dr. Betty Lee Sung, chief consultant, made invaluable contributions throughout the study. Dr. Setsuko Nishi, Dr. Jae Kim, Grace Lyu Volkhausen, Rev. Joseph Hien and Dr. Carmencita Fugado all labored on behalf of their respective committees. Finally, from the Chinese-American Planning Council, Charles Wang directed the project and Betty Tseng, monitored the progress of this project.

The project owes a great debt to Eleanor Wong Telemaque, our chief writer, and to the Dram Group for raising funds on behalf of the study. William Sun's Chinese calligraphy added beauty to the cover.

These people were the driving force of the project. It was the ultimate aim of all those who participated that this publication help the public within the Tri-State Region to gain a better understanding of Asian Americans leading to improved human resource service delivery for the ever-growing Asian American communities in the area.

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